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## Viewing cable 08ISLAMABAD1600, CODEL CAPUANO MEETS WITH NEW GOP

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- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08ISLAMABAD1600</a>	<a href="#">2008-04-17 13:43</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Islamabad</a>

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INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 8464  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 7723  
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RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 001600

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/17/2018

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SUBJECT: CODEL CAPUANO MEETS WITH NEW GOP

¶1. (C) Summary: Codel Capuano visited Islamabad April 13-14, meeting with Pakistan's new Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Deputy National Assembly Speaker. The delegation included U.S. Representatives Michael Capuano (D-MA), William Pascrell (D-NJ) and Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ), as well as House Sergeant at Arms Wilson Livingood. In each meeting, Congressional members voiced continued support for the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and stressed the need for the newly elected Pakistani government to show immediate achievements on the War on Terror. All three Pakistani officials countered that the fight against extremism required dialogue and development, as well as military/police action, and that only through education and employment would this national problem be solved in the long-term. End summary.

Prime Minister Gillani  
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¶2. (C) Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gillani launched his April 14 meeting with Codel Capuano, committing to "broaden Pakistan's relationship with America" and to visit the U.S. soon. While Gillani admitted that his Pakistan People's Party (PPP) received a "split mandate," winning just a plurality in the February 18 parliamentary elections, he called the overall win by moderate, secular parties "a ray of hope." Gillani said that the PPP could have controlled Pakistan's federal and provincial governments with much slimmer margins, but preferred, instead, to build broad-based coalitions and to allow regional parties to take the lead at the provincial level.

¶3. (C) Replying to the Codel's warning that the American public would expect to see quick achievements from the new GOP on the War on Terror, Gillani noted that his party had lost its leader, Benazir Bhutto, to terrorism, and "would not hesitate to use military options" in this war. Coalition partner Awami National Party (ANP), with its political base of support in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), "should also be able to achieve results," Gillani promised. The Ambassador noted that the USG had high hopes for the new coalition and that the Embassy had begun to brief the political parties on USG programs.

¶4. (C) Gillani stressed that the new GOP would remain "united with the U.S. against the curse of terrorism." He advocated a three-prong strategy to fight extremism in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA): (1) economic development; (2) social development; and, (3) military strength. Gillani pushed for quick action on U.S. legislation to establish Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZ) and named textiles as a potential growth industry. He also noted that all of the National Assembly members from FATA were educated and enlightened. The delegation agreed that this kind of social and economic development was "more important than military aid."

¶5. (C) The fight against extremism would require joint, concerted and long-term efforts by Pakistan and the U.S., Gillani stressed. He thought the bilateral fight against illicit drugs was a model for cooperation. During his tenure as National Assembly Speaker (1993-1996), the two countries cooperated to end poppy production in Pakistan; his country now accounted for just a small percentage of global supply. Similar cooperation was required for the fight against extremism, and Gillani appreciated the Codel's recognition that Pakistan's sovereignty and dignity must be respected in that fight.

¶6. (C) When asked pointedly where he thought Osama bin Laden was hiding, Gillani replied, "The intelligence agencies have no idea, but he is not in Pakistan." Afghanistan-Pakistan cross-border movements were impossible to stop, he added. When asked how the U.S. could help Pakistan address the root causes of extremism, Gillani repeated that the FATA populace needed social development, employment, education and health

care.

¶7. (C) Gillani blamed Musharraf's government for the current wheat (and thus, bread) shortage and for not constructing new energy plants during its eight-year tenure. The Ambassador noted that a food subsidy by the U.S. was unlikely, but

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American private investment in energy generation was more promising for all sides. Gillani ended by mentioning that, after new Finance Minister Ishaq Dar returns from visiting the World Bank, the GOP will be able to present a concrete proposal on which areas the U.S. can help. The Ambassador noted that the U.S. was accelerating payments from Coalition Support Funds.

Interior Minister Malik  
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¶8. (C) Meeting the same day, Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated to Codel Capuano that the PPP-led government would continue the "same counterterrorism policies started by President Musharraf." He added that the new GOP would leave "no stone unturned" in expelling terrorist cells from Pakistan. In the War on Terror, Pakistan was grateful for U.S. assistance, both expert personnel and funding, Malik added.

¶9. (C) Noting the terrorist assassination of PPP leader Benazir Bhutto, whom he served as a senior security advisor, Malik promised the new GOP would continue to fight extremism "so long as Pakistan continues to have the support of the international community." Reacting to the Codel's emphasis for the new GOP to get quick results along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Malik argued Pakistan's Frontier Corps required enhanced capabilities, including its own intelligence unit. He complained that actionable information was not shared in a timely manner by Pakistan's intelligence agencies.

¶10. (C) "We will enforce the writ of the government" in the frontier, Malik insisted, "come what may." However, the new GOP would give dialogue a chance in order to gain the confidence of the local populace. Malik believed they, more than anyone, were "fed up" with the road blocks and electricity outages. The GOP would: (1) work with the locally-elected representatives; (2) collect intelligence on "most wanted," particularly foreign fighters; and, (3) conduct sting operations and other direct hits. On this last point, Malik emphasized, "we won't hesitate to act."

¶11. (C) Malik had a number of reforms in mind, starting with the abolishment of the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), the colonial era regulations that govern law and order in the FATA. These were "draconian" criminal laws, and he said a newer code would be put in place, reflecting popular participation. Malik also advocated for a works program in the FATA, to gainfully employ thousands of young men on development projects. And he floated the idea of a "terrorist victims program," in which those families who lose loved ones and/or property due to a terrorist act would receive compensation. Distribution of funds would be handled by an NGO, and international donors would be encouraged to contribute.

Deputy National Assembly Speaker Kundi  
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¶12. (C) Codel Capuano also met April 14 with Deputy National Assembly Speaker Faisal Karim Kundi. He pointed to his own recent electoral victory over Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman as proof of popular rejection of extremism. The February 18 general elections had been free and fair, Kundi added.

¶13. (C) Kundi stressed that Pakistanis had suffered most from

terrorist attacks over the last six years. Not just Pakistani soldiers, but the general population faced increased suicide attacks, he said. And while more international aid would be needed for the FATA and bordering areas (like his own D.I.Khan district), Kundi also pleaded for a greater share to "grassroots Pakistan" and for more accountability of expenditures. "Lack of accountability leads to a lack of trust."

¶14. (C) Kundi reiterated Prime Minister Gillani's earlier point that fighting terrorism was a government priority. The GOP would attempt dialogue, Kundi explained, but would not hesitate to use the Army. The PPP enjoyed popular support, he claimed, and had built broad-based coalitions at the national and provincial levels. The ANP in the NWFP "enjoy a

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particularly good relationship with Afghanistan," Kundi commented.

¶15. (C) Terrorism had to be tackled before the new GOP could move on to equally pressing economic problems, Kundi said. Coalition partners had been given key ministries and (nearly) all parties were being consulted on how to address these problems. "This is our last chance," referring to elected government. For both extremism and financial woes, education was the silver bullet, Kundi argued; "the U.S. cannot wait a generation," the delegation responded.

¶16. (C) The Codel did lend its support to the ROZ legislation before Congress, and Kundi concurred that increased foreign investment and trade could help average Pakistanis in the short-term. He complained, however, that the State Department's travel advisory on Pakistan unnecessarily hampered travel by American businessmen.

¶17. (U) Codel Capuano did not clear on this message.

PATTERSON

=====CABLE ENDS=====